

Organizational Support Issues for the Fire Safety Education Program

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Certification Statement

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

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Abstract

The problem was that the effectiveness of East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District's fire safety education program is hindered by a lack of support within the organizational structure.

The purpose of the research was to examine support issues related to the department's fire safety effort and to make recommendations for changes to the organizational structure that would lead to an increase in fire safety education program effectiveness. The evaluative method of research was used to address the following questions: (a) How is fire safety education ideally supported within a fire department's organizational structure, (b) In what ways are East Lake's fire safety education efforts lacking support within the department's organizational structure, and (c) How is East Lake's fire safety education program hindered by a lack of support within the organizational structure? To answer these questions, elements of the ideal organizational structure to support a fire safety education program was described; an audit tool was created to evaluate relevant department documents; and a questionnaire was developed and administered to assess the attitudes of specific members of the department. Collecting the data and analyzing the results exposed a number of shortcomings in the organization: community education in the mission statement lack department-wide support, there was no fire prevention strategy, job descriptions did not include a public education element, training and education in public education was not promoted, and administration was not actively pursuing grant monies or community partnerships. Recommendations include establishing a relationship with all stakeholders, with the goals of developing an organizational strategic plan and ultimately increasing the effectiveness of the fire safety program.

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Organizational Support Issues for the Fire Safety Education Program

Introduction

“The greatest numbers of fire deaths occur in the home, with the majority in one- and two-family dwellings” (Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA], 2008, p.

Introduction-4). “Children playing [are] the leading cause of child fire injuries; suspicious (arson) activity is the leading cause of child deaths. One-third of arson fires are attributed to children under the age of 15” (FEMA, 2004, p.1). These sobering statistics become very real when an incident occurs in the local community.

In the month of July 2010, two unrelated incidents occurred in the East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District in which nine year old boys were caught by their parents playing with fire. One boy lit a shirt on fire and then tried to ignite a candle with it. The other boy said he was just fascinated with lighting things on fire. These are just two of the 40 children from within East Lake’s boundaries referred to the local Juvenile Firesetters intervention program in the past five years. The education component of the local intervention program, which teaches about the high level of risk associated with fire play, is geared toward children (many mandated by the courts to attend) who have been involved with fire. Within the “continuum of care” model in *The Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Handbook*, this component is mirrored by the prevention-based fire safety education program that may be offered for all children from pre-school through high school by the fire service or other organizations (Gaynor, 2000).

East Lake Fire Rescue (ELFR) has a fire safety education program, but for the past 25 years it has remained virtually unchanged. Reaching only a small segment of school-age children, the program is not comprehensive in scope and lacks direction and consistency. The

problem is that the effectiveness of ELFR's fire safety education program is hindered by a lack of support within the organizational structure.

The purpose of this evaluative research paper is to examine support issues related to the department's fire safety education effort and to make recommendations for change to the organizational structure that will lead to an increase in fire safety education program effectiveness. The following questions were addressed: (a) How is fire safety education ideally supported within a fire department's organizational structure, (b) In what ways are ELFR's fire safety education efforts lacking support within the department's organizational structure, and (c) How is ELFR's fire safety education program hindered by a lack of support within the organizational structure?

Background and Significance

East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District

The East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District is located in Pinellas County, in the Tampa Bay area on Florida's central west coast. The 33 square mile service area is bordered by three of the 19 fire departments operating within Pinellas County, as well as by two neighboring counties. Although unincorporated, East Lake has a strong community identity. It is a well-educated and affluent "bedroom community".

According to the U.S. Census 2006-2008, East Lake is inhabited by approximately 31,000 permanent residents. Over 10,000 residents have bachelors, masters, or doctorate degrees. Earnings for approximately 2,500 residents are between \$100,000 - \$149,000 and over \$200,000 for over 1,500 residents. Those five years of age and younger number approximately 1,200 and those between five and 18 years of age number about 3,300. Also, within East Lake's boundaries are two public elementary schools (pre-kindergarten through fifth grades), five

private preschools, and one private school with grades pre-kindergarten through high school. The local public school system encompasses all of Pinellas County and operates 130 schools.

East Lake Fire Rescue (ELFR)

With an annual budget of over \$3.5 million and three stations, ELFR is governed by an elected five person Board of Commissioners. Supporting the Fire Chief, who is under contract to the Fire Commissioners, are two non-firefighter office personnel, a Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal, and a Division Chief of Operations, Training, and Emergency Medical Services. Staff personnel also include the three District Chiefs, working 24-hour shifts, who oversee a total of 30 unionized line personnel (Firefighters, Driver-Engineers, and Lieutenants). Starting as a small all-volunteer department less than 40 years ago, ELFR now operates two advanced life support (ALS) engines, an ALS Squad that serves as the department's heavy rescue vehicle, a wild-land firefighting unit, and a water tanker truck. The all-career firefighters, each either an Emergency Medical Technician or Paramedic, responded to a total of 2673 calls for assistance in 2009. ELFR participates in an automatic aid system along with all Pinellas County fire departments and mutual aid agreements with the neighboring counties.

ELFR's Fire Safety Education Program

As a department, ELFR has made great strides over several decades, growing both in size and professionalism to meet the needs of the community. Stations have been built, personnel added, equipment upgraded, policies written, and procedures revised, yet the fire safety education program operates today almost exactly as it did in the mid-1980's. Unfortunately, lacking direction and consistency, the program is not comprehensive in terms of the audience it reaches, the message it delivers, the methods it uses, or the impact it has.

Delivered to local pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes (and the occasional Mom's club or scout troop), the program consists of a "show and tell" of the station, trucks, and equipment; a viewing of a children's safety video from the NFPA or other organization; a short "question and answer" session; a demonstration of a firefighter donning the bunker gear and self-contained breathing apparatus; and a chance for the kids to squirt water from the hoses. Certainly, the fire safety education program is fun, interesting, and popular -- tradition even calls for transporting some of the classes from the school to the fire station in the antique fire truck. Although rooted in tradition, the delivery and content of the program may vary depending on knowledge, experience, and ability of the company officer and crew involved: there is no formalized presentation, no script, and no plan. Even the safety messages to be taught are not specified. Some continuity is provided by the presence of the Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal, but who may not always be available.

The impact of ELFR's fire safety education program is not measured in any way other than a simple tracking of how many individuals participated in a given month. Thank you notes, cards, and drawings from the kids, although much appreciated, are not evidence of what they have learned or how well that knowledge is retained from year to year. Even if the transfer of knowledge is successful, the lessons are necessarily limited to what children six years old and younger can understand. Also, there is no educational reinforcement of fire safety messages to children in first grade and older, so by the time a young boy turns nine what he remembers most about fire is simply the fun and excitement of a visit to the station when he was in kindergarten.

Importance to the Fire Service

Changes to ELFR's current fire safety education program could lead to more comprehensive results, yet without clear direction and consistency in implementation the

effectiveness of these changes would be haphazard at best. A careful analysis of select department documents, along with a questionnaire tailored to this issue, revealed where and how ELFR's organizational structure is hindering the effectiveness of the fire safety education program. Examining these support issues and making recommendations for change to the organizational structure is the first step necessary in order to increase the effectiveness of ELFR's fire safety education program.

This evaluative research relates to the Executive Fire Officer course "*Executive Analysis of Community Risk Reduction*" with the transition "from being reactive to proactive, with emphasis on leadership development, prevention, and risk reduction (FEMA, 2008). The findings of this research relate to the goals of the United State Fire Administration's operational objectives in that it will lessen risks at the local level, improve advance planning, and improve the department's professional status (FEMA, 2008). Lastly, as an additional benefit this research will provide an opportunity to improve the fire safety education at ELFR by reducing fires and saving firefighter lives. (National Fallen Firefighters Foundation [NFFF], 2004).

Literature Review

In order to examine support issues related to the ELFR's fire safety education effort and to make recommendation for change to the organizational structure that will lead to an increase in fire safety education program effectiveness, literature relevant to these topics was reviewed.

The Importance of Fire Safety Education

Two-thirds of the National Commission on Fire Prevention and Control agreed "that most fires occur because of public apathy toward good fire prevention practices"; they also agreed that public education is the "single activity with the greatest potential for reducing losses" (FEMA, 1973, p. 105). This philosophy continues to hold true with the report *America Burning*

Recommissioned stating that “no prevention effort can succeed without a public education component” (FEMA, 2002).

Rielage (2009) wrote in his article *Fire-Safety on a Shoestring* “we never know the fires, injuries, or deaths we prevent through public education” (p. 1). “Comprehensive fire and safety prevention – – largely in the form of education – – presents the largest opportunity for any department to increase its awareness in the community while achieving its primary goal of keeping its citizens safe from harm” (May, 2007, p. 1). Public fire safety education is an important service for a community. Through this service, the organization can teach citizens how to prevent injury, property loss, and death which will put “less demand on other emergency services” (Barr & Eversole, 2003, p 1063).

The National Fallen Firefighter Foundation’s *Every One Goes Home*® website (2004) describes one of the *16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives* as “Public education must receive more resources and be championed as a critical fire and life safety program.” In 2004, Everette and her group at the National Fallen Firefighter Foundation’s Firefighter Life Safety Summit looked into whether public fire safety education could save firefighter lives and she wrote that, unfortunately, there was just not enough data for them to come to a conclusion.

Relevant Organizational Support Issues

According to the *Fire Chief’s Handbook* there are four important organizational anchors for the fire service: “clearly defined mission and clear customer expectations; shared organizational values and an understanding of the organizational culture; well managed financial resources; and, appropriate levels of training; organizational policies, realistic and complete standard operating procedure, and definitive strategic and operational plans” (Barr & Eversole, 2003, p. 213).

From the *Executive Analysis of Community Risk Reduction – Student Manual*: “Members in an organization that has institutionalized risk reduction as a core value ... willingly provide support to enhance risk reduction efforts” and, furthermore, “a stagnant or malignant organizational culture can be a major detractor to risk reduction” (FEMA, 2009, p. 1-31). “Organizational commitment for community education is not a one-time thing. It’s an all-the-time effort that becomes part of the department culture” (FEMA, 2008, p.I-8). Community [fire] education must be institutionalized as an organizational value within the fire department’s mission statement, prevention strategy, budget, job description, and training (FEMA, 2008).

Fire safety education should be a key component in the mission statement. In its basic form an organization’s mission statement is a kind of road map (Barr & Eversole, 2003). The mission statement reflects “who you are as an organization, what services the organization is mandated to provide, and how the organization intends to go about its business” (Wallace, 2009, p.3). The mission of the fire department rests on the seat of a stool where each leg represents code enforcement, public fire safety education, and emergency response all equally important in saving lives and property (NFPA, 2003). Each support to the legs of the stool braces the successful delivery of the mission statement through training, preparing members of the organization, partnerships, relationships, politics, infrastructure, and equipment (NFPA, 2003).

The precourse assignment for the *Executive Analysis of Community Risk Reduction* states that often “the prevention function is viewed as separate and distinct from the response mission”, but that “both response and prevention have the same goal: to prevent or reduce harm to the public from fire, preventable injuries ...” (FEMA, n.d., p.6). But, it is the responsibility of the executive level, as detailed in the *Fire Protection Handbook*, to demonstrate support for fire safety education by “describing how public education integrates into the mission” and

“representing public education’s importance inside and outside the organization” (NFPA, 2003, p. 5-8).

Fire safety education should be a part of the overall prevention strategy. Both the *Fire Chief’s Handbook* and *Public Fire Education Planning* agree that the community and fire departments will always need fire fighters but “effective risk reduction through education, engineering, and enforcement” is necessary “in a comprehensive prevention strategy” (Barr & Eversole, 2003, p. 1032; FEMA, 2008, p. 10). In the *Fire Protection Handbook*, the executive level of support is demonstrated by the following actions: representing public education’s importance inside and outside the organization, identifying public education as a section within the organizational structure, ensuring a public education voice in decision making and planning processes, and providing adequate personnel and other resources dedicated to public education programs. (FEMA, 2003, p. 5-8)

Several components needed for an “effective fire prevention strategy”, include: “there must be a fire prevention team with the clearly defined task of the leadership and delivery of fire prevention tasks, and public education and training activities that are comprehensive and age- and culture-appropriate for each audience” (Everette, 2004, para 3). Robertson (1999) wrote there are five elements essential to have a “successful fire education program: identify the local fire problem, selection of an educational strategy, design of materials, implementation, and evaluation” (p. 121). Along with these elements a periodic evaluation needs to be performed for the reason that “anytime...the program activity remains almost identical for more than five to seven years, an organization may be working its way toward inefficiency and ineffectiveness” (Barr & Eversole, 2003, p. 10).

According to the *Fire Protection Handbook* “including public education in strategic and operational plans, as well as budget packages” is one way that the executive level can demonstrate support for fire safety education (NFPA, 2003, p5-8).

Fire safety education should be supported by a sufficient budget. A nationwide survey of fire chiefs conducted by the Home Safety Council® shows unmet needs in fire and life safety public education and training resources, where many fire chiefs named competing priorities and a lack of resources and funding as key obstacles (2007).

If a community expects a program that is not delivered because resources are directed into another then the problem is not due to workload but to prioritization (Barr & Eversole, 2003). “A manager should assess the expenditures in the budget cycle as if they were investments [for achieving the mission of the organization] not expenses” (Barr & Eversole, 2003, p. 9).

What needs to occur for these funds is a plan-of-action called a budget. Here a budget cannot only show where the money was spent but also what was accomplished with it. It is necessary to analyze previous budgets to make sure that it is tied into the plan-of-action and create a list of expenses. Accounting for expenses can include: written materials, advertisements and signage, audio and visual equipment, expenses for seminars or conferences, other consumables, and support material (Hall et al., 1997).

Funding for a fire safety education program can come in different forms such as taxpayer dollars and donations. Another source for funding can come from grants. The types of grants that are available for programs like this include grants for general support, matching grants, and project or restricted grants (Hall, Murnane, Powell, & Sneed, 1997).

The fire department should look to organizations in the community as additional resources (Barr & Eversole, 2003). Along with determining the needs of the community “the strategy can include collaborative partnerships with other community, state, and national organizations and agencies” (NFPA 1035, p. 1035-17). The *Fire Protection Handbook* (NFPA, 2003) and the *Executive Analysis of Community Risk Reduction* precourse (FEMA, n.d.) agree that a successful organization is also built and managed through coalitions.

Fire safety education should be included in job descriptions. *Public Fire Education Planning* views community education as a department wide activity, that “the most successful community education programs all share one common strategy: every person [in the organization] is a community educator” FEMA, 2008, p. I-9). When the fire chief and others treat and respect public fire safety education as a key organizational responsibility; it becomes a critical component of the “fire and life safety infrastructure of the community” (NFPA, 2003, p5-8). Porth wrote in his article *Is Prevention a Foreign Language?* “Prevention is probably most affected by the organizational or administrative philosophy of an organization, it starts at the top” (2007, para 6). If the leadership is not behind community risk reduction then the rest of the organization will not have the passion for it and in order for the organization to be progressive the staff must display a behavior that reflects the mission (FEMA, 2009).

“In any community risk-reduction initiative the [chief] is going to be promoting change to the community” (FEMA, 2009, p. 5-16). However, the chief would need to properly prepare the organization before initiating any kind of plan. This will also involve some internal politics or “building organizational equity [or credibility which is the] cornerstone of effective leadership” (FEMA, 2009, p. 5-17). The *Fire Protection Handbook*, the executive level of support is demonstrated by “assigning responsibility and accountability for public education to a

specific manager” and “providing adequate personnel and other resources dedicated to public education programs” (NFPA, 2003, p. 5-8).

Public Fire Education Planning, A Five Step Process (FEMA, 2008) emphasizes one of the things that needs to be done in organizations is to include skills in public education as part of job descriptions because these skills are already part of the minimum requirements for the standards for a fire fighter and fire officer. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1001, Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications requires new firefighters to have the skills to deliver a public education presentation from a prepared lesson plan (p. Introduction-6) and NFPA 1021, Standard for Fire Officers, specifies the requirement of the ability to deliver presentations and also develop a department public education program (p. I- 6).

Fire safety education should be supported by on-going training. *The Fire Chief's Handbook* stresses that regardless of the size, type, or configuration of the organization, it should focus on customer service. It continues on to state that to be successful at this the organization needs to focus on its members through training and education programs, that the organization “is essentially incomplete and virtually non-functional without adequate education and training” (Barr & Eversole, 2003, p. 304). Even the smallest of [organizations] must have some sort of formalized training program to ensure uniformity of operations [because] on-the-job-training or learning by the seat of the pants is no longer [an] acceptable alternative” (Barr & Eversole, 2003, p. 485). This training and education is also necessary to prepare the individuals in meeting the expectations of the organization’s mission (Barr & Eversole, 2003).

At the executive level, one measure of support for fire safety education is demonstrated with “the ongoing professional development of public educators by allocating funds to attend regional and national meetings or conferences” (NFPA, 2003, p. 5-8). There are organizations

that offer a pay incentive for formal educational classes or programs that are used toward improving one's training and to even aid the individual in achieving a higher education (Barr & Eversole, 2003).

The Fire Chief's Handbook and the *Fire Protection Handbook* both agree that all it would take would be a written operating procedure that contains a lesson plan or course outline written to provide a list of learning objectives that anyone could use in addition to the "show and tell" (Barr & Eversole, 2003, p. 1064; NFPA, 2003, p. 5-38). The *Fire Protection Handbook* goes on to say that at a minimum a lesson plan would assist everyone to be more efficient with their time and to assist in teaching the same material (NFPA, 2003, p. 5-38).

Measuring Fire Safety Program Effectiveness

The *Short Guide to Evaluating Local Public Fire Education Programs* presents that evaluating public fire safety education is important in determining if the program is worth repeating, for feedback, and budgetary support (FEMA, 1991, p. 1). Both Robertson and Porth agree that programs need to be monitored, modified, and evaluated for effectiveness and that training, experience, and preparation along "with methods to document and evaluate the effort are paramount" (1999, p. 123; 2007, para. 6).

There are many reasons that an evaluation needs to be performed: how the program will impact the bottom line, where to allocate resources, proved support and gain visibility for the program, motivation, to assist in determining the effectiveness on limited resources, and if the evaluation is not performed then it is quite possible that resources may be directed to areas that are not productive (FEMA, 1991; Anderson, 2003; Barr & Eversole, 2003; and NFPA, 2003).

The *Fire Protection Handbook* and *Public Fire Education Planning* share some of the same reasons for the lack of evaluations: "fear of working with numbers, fear that a good

evaluation may identify shortcomings in the program and efforts, and lack of knowledge about evaluations” (NFPA, 2003, p. 5-80; FEMA, 2008, p. 5-1). The goal of an evaluation is the simplest and best way to demonstrate a program’s effectiveness, to identify when there is a change in fire incidents, and to assess a change in knowledge and behavior toward fire and burn prevention (FEMA, 1991; FEMA, 2008; Hwang et al., 2003).

From review of the literature it was evident that a successful fire safety education program is a very proactive way to advance the overall mission of a fire department. This led to research into how components of the fire department organization (namely a mission statement, a fire prevention strategy, a budget, job description, and training) could provide ideal support for fire safety education. One of the most influential to the research was the U.S. Fire Administration’s *Public fire education planning, A five step process* which indicated that for a program to be success the fire department needs to “institutionalize community education as an organizational value” (FEMA, 2008, p I-9).

Procedures

Using the evaluative method to examine the organizational structure that supports the public fire safety education program at ELFR, the following research questions were addressed: (a) How is fire safety education ideally supported within a fire department’s organizational structure, (b) In what ways are ELFR’s fire safety education efforts lacking support within the department’s organizational structure, and (c) How is ELFR’s fire safety education program hindered by a lack of support within the organizational structure? To answer these questions, the following steps were completed: what was to be evaluated was clearly defined, specific measurement criteria was developed, a plan for conducting the measurement was implemented, the study was conducted, and the data analyzed and evaluated, and a conclusion reached.

Organizational Audit of Fire Safety Education Support

To answer the first research question, how is fire safety education ideally supported within a fire department's organizational structure, a literature review was performed to identify components of organizational structure and best practices by which fire departments should be conducting their public fire safety education program. The components of organizational structure which included elements that are necessary for the ideal support of a fire safety education program were identified: mission, prevention strategy, budget, job descriptions, and training. Next, by reviewing the relevant literature, the specific elements of each component of a successful fire safety education program were identified and noted. From this process, a five-part measurement tool, named "Organizational Audit of Fire Safety Education Support" (Appendix A), was developed to assess the organizational components relative to how they could ideally support the fire safety education program. Then the elements of these components were formed into a check box list of the specific elements. By using this five-part audit tool to rate the associated department documents, organizational support of fire safety education was measured.

The second research question, in what ways are ELFR's fire safety education efforts lacking support within the department's organizational structure, was answered by examining specific ELFR documents related to each of the components previously identified. These documents were then analyzed by using the appropriate page of the five-part "Organizational Audit of Fire Safety Education Support" (Appendix A). Using this measurement tool either confirmed or refuted that a specific element of a component was evident in the associated ELFR document. The written documents examined included the Mission Statement found on the East Lake Fire Rescue website (2010), the Five Year Plan (ELTSFCD, n.d.), the 2009-2010 Budget (ELTSFCD, 2009), and the Job Descriptions for each position and related Training standard

operating procedures (SOP) (ELTSFCD, SOP Manual, 2010). All documents for each component were analyzed together in order to complete one measurement for each component (rather than one measurement for each related document). Taking into account that different individuals might come to different conclusions and documents may change, the following information at the top of each of the five forms (one for each component) was filled out: Completed By, Position, Document(s) Examined, and Date of Document(s). Then each document was carefully examined for evidence that a particular element was present, and if so a check mark was made in the box. Therefore, a lack of a check mark would indicate a lack of support for fire safety education efforts within that particular component of ELFR's organizational structure.

ELFR Fire Safety Education Questionnaire

In order to study the third question, how is ELFR's fire safety education program hindered by a lack of support within the organizational structure, the attitudes of those who are currently most likely to be involved in making public fire safety education presentations were evaluated. At ELFR, the public safety education presentations are typically performed by Lieutenants and their crews, a total of thirty individuals. A measurement tool, the "ELFR Fire Safety Education Questionnaire" (Appendix B), intended to measure their attitudes related to how public safety education is supported within the organizational structure, was developed, based on the organizational components and elements previously identified. The questions were closed-ended, seeking a rating from 1 to 5 to measure agreement with the statement provided. The directions stated: "Please circle the single number that best corresponds to your attitude regarding the statement. 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Indifferent; 4 = Agree; and 5 = Strongly Agree.

The following statements were used:

1. Fire safety education is an important function of ELFR.
2. Fire safety education is the responsibility of every member of ELFR.
3. ELFR, as a department, values fire safety education.
4. ELFR's fire safety education program is well promoted within the department.
5. ELFR's fire safety education program is well promoted in the community.
6. I am aware of the goals of ELFR's fire safety education program.
7. I am aware of the objectives of ELFR's fire safety education program.
8. I use a lesson plan when making a fire safety education presentation.
9. I feel competent when making a fire safety education presentation.
10. The budget allocates enough money for the fire safety education program.
11. The fire safety education program is adequate (teaching pre-K and Kindergarten).
12. The fire safety education program should be expanded to grades 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.
13. I spend enough time on activities related to the fire safety education program.
14. I would like to be more involved in fire safety education activities.
15. I am aware that public education is one of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives.
16. I believe that an emphasis on fire safety education could save firefighter lives.

The questionnaire was submitted to another member of the fire service for the purpose of testing and revision before it was distributed. It was determined that the 16 questions would take approximately 3 minutes to complete. After a final version of the questionnaire was prepared, a letter of introduction (Appendix C) was written explaining the reason for the questionnaire, the length and simplicity of it, a request to remain anonymous, and to return it by a specific date. It

was delivered through inter-departmental mail (and returned in the same manner) while the potential respondents were on duty, along with a self-addressed envelope.

Each questionnaire that was returned was assigned a letter “A” thru “V”. These letters, representing individual respondents, were entered in the column heading of a spreadsheet titled “Results for September 2010 ELFR Safety Education Questionnaire Part 1” (Appendix D). The numbers “1” thru “16” for each row identified each of the 16 questions presented on the questionnaire. Next, the numeric responses from each respondent were entered in the appropriate spreadsheet cell. Average ratings were calculated per question (at the right) and per respondent (at the bottom). Next, the total number of respondents who selected a particular rating for a question was entered into “Results for September 2010 ELFR Safety Education Questionnaire Part 2” (Appendix D) which had columns for each of the ratings values, “1” thru “5” and rows “1” thru “16” for each of the questions, which were also written out. The average rating was calculated per question (on the right), which also corresponded to the averages on Part 1. Next, each of these ratings was transformed into a percentage on the “Results for September 2010 ELFR Safety Education Questionnaire Part 3” (Appendix D) using a similar format to Part 2.

Limitations

There were limitations to the information available from department documents to be used for the audit tool. Additionally, distribution of the questionnaire did not include the board of fire commissioners, any position above Lieutenants, the office staff, any members of the public, or fire department personnel from any other department. The questionnaire was limited to the measurement of the attitude of the respondent. The questionnaire was not tested for reliability and validity.

Results

Answering the research question of how is fire safety education ideally supported within a fire department's organizational structure resulted in the creation of the five-part "Organizational Audit of Fire Safety Education Support" (Appendix A). Using this audit tool helped to answer the second research question by identifying the ways that ELFR's fire safety education efforts lack support within the department's organizational structure. Following are the results of the organizational audit in each of the five relevant organizational structure areas. The results of the questionnaire were designed to answer the third research question about the ways in which the lack of support is hindering the fire safety education program at ELFR.

Results of Organizational Audit of Fire Safety Education Support

Part One: Mission. Part one of the organizational audit tool was used in order to discover what elements are present within ELFR's mission statement that would ideally support a fire safety education program. The mission statement for ELFR, found on at the top of the department's homepage, was the "document" examined:

The Mission of East Lake Fire & Rescue is to provide our community with services which reduce the risk to life, health, and property through pro-active member and community education, fire prevention, suppression, and emergency medical care. Our personnel will go "*Above and Beyond*" with a commitment to excellence in care, courtesy, and professionalism in services to the citizens of and visitors to our fire control district within the level of resources available to the department. (East Lake Fire Rescue, 2010)

The following checked items show where the ELFR mission statement has evidence of organizational support for the fire safety education program, while the unchecked items show where ideal support is lacking:

- ✓ written and clearly defined
- ✓ identifies organization
- ✓ indicates what services are mandated
- ✓ reflects how mission will be accomplished
- ✓ includes “prevention” (or similar)
- ✓ includes “public fire safety education” (or similar)
- ✓ “enforcement”, “education”, and “response” are given equal importance
- ☐ gives importance to training and preparing members
- ☐ encourages relationships with community partners

Part Two: Fire Prevention Strategy. Part two of the organizational audit tool was utilized to determine what elements are present within ELFR’s fire prevention strategy that would ideally support a fire safety education program. As of the time of this research, ELFR did not have a written fire prevention strategy. All of the following unchecked items show where ideal support is lacking:

- ☐ written and clearly defined
- ☐ includes a mission statement
- ☐ stabilizes the organization
- ☐ embraces service delivery
- ☐ a vision to move fire safety education forward
- ☐ pro-active in approach towards fire safety education

- ☐ flexible in implementation of fire safety education
- ☐ sets long term goals for fire safety education
- ☐ establishes priorities for fire safety education
- ☐ assesses environment for developing and delivering fire safety education
- ☐ assesses external environment for developing and delivery fire safety education
- ☐ defines internal objectives of a fire safety education program
- ☐ defines external objectives of a fire safety education program
- ☐ utilizes input from community regarding fire safety education
- ☐ undergoes periodic evaluation and revision
- ☐ provides for employee training in fire safety education
- ☐ provides for citizen training in fire safety education
- ☐ addresses wise use of resources for fire safety education
- ☐ includes a marketing plan for fire safety education

Although ELFR doesn't have a written strategic plan, it does have a fire prevention standard operating procedure (SOP) that provides for the following: company fire safety inspections of public buildings, the drawing of pre-fire plans (a "blueprint" of the layout of these public buildings, used in case of a fire), and fire hydrant water flow testing. Additionally, a limited fire safety education program (the subject of this research) is in place and ELFR has participated in the Pinellas County Juvenile Fire Setters Coalition for the past five years.

Part Three: Budget. Part three of the organizational audit tool was used to show what elements are present within ELFR's budget that would ideally support a fire safety education program. The document examined was the FY 2009-2010 East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District Final Budget, Resolution 09-05 (2009). The following checked items show

where the ELFR budget supports the fire safety education program, while the unchecked items show where ideal support is lacking:

- ✓ provisions made for seminars and conferences
- ✓ travel and meal expenses
- ✓ software programs, CDs, trade magazines
- ☐ develop partnership with other community organizations
- ☐ in-kind contributions from community for services, time, and products
- ☐ performance goals and objectives, met or ongoing
- ✓ provide sufficient funding for materials and supplies
- ☐ provide sufficient funding for personnel
- ☐ seek grant funding
- ☐ detailed accounting of expenditures

The budget supports \$1500.00 for public education, \$1500.00 for supplies, and a line item to include magazine subscriptions. Within the budget is reimbursement for mileage traveled in one's personal vehicle and for meals at conferences and seminars that are outside of the area. The department does provide an Education Benefits (SOP 113) for its members for the reimbursement of tuition for courses taken at an accredited college or university, the Florida State Fire College and the National Fire Academy (ELTSFCD, SOP manual, 2010).

Part Four: Job Descriptions. Part four of the organizational audit tool was used to examine ELFR's job descriptions for evidence of elements that would ideally support a fire safety education program. The documents examined were the SOPs (ELTSFCD, 2010). The following checked items indicate where the ELFR job descriptions show evidence of

organizational support for the fire safety education program, while the unchecked items show where ideal support is lacking:

- ☐ fire safety education responsibility of fire chief
- ☐ fire safety education responsibility of deputy chief/fire marshal
- ☐ fire safety education responsibility of division chief (operations, training, ems)
- ☐ fire safety education responsibility of district chief
- ☐ fire safety education responsibility of lieutenants
- ☐ fire safety education responsibility of line personnel
- ☐ can represent public education in and out of the organization
- ☐ can describe how public education integrates with the mission
- ☐ can identify public education as a part of the organizational structure
- ✓ assigns public education to a specific manager
- ☐ gives public education a voice in decision making and planning
- ☐ provides adequate personnel and other resources to public education program
- ☐ includes public education in strategies, operations, and budget plans
- ☐ accesses organizations in and out of the department
- ☐ attends public educator professional development meetings and conferences
- ✓ can make public education presentations (firefighters NFPA 1001)
- ✓ can develop and deliver public education program (fire officers NFPA 1021)

Responsibility for fire safety education is not displayed in any of the job descriptions of the department with one exception: the Division Chief of Fire Prevention who, in the SOP, is assigned the responsibility of managing the public education activities of the department, but at

this time this is an unfilled non-functioning position. By default public education currently falls under the responsibility of the Fire Marshal.

Part Five: Training. Part five of the organizational audit tool was used in order to discover what elements of training ideally support a fire safety education program. The documents examined were the SOPs (ELTSFCD, 2010). The following checked items indicate where the ELFR training show evidence of organizational support for the fire safety education program, while the unchecked items show where ideal support is lacking:

- ☐ training and education meets the expectations of the mission
- ✓ pay incentive for formal education
- ☐ everyone is a community educator
- ☐ confident in working from a lesson plan or course outline
- ☐ promotes state and national educational programs or courses
- ☐ ongoing evaluation and revision of fire safety education training
- ☐ feedback from community on program delivery of the message and content

Members are made aware of state and national educational courses; fire and life safety education is not promoted as an opportunity. ELFR provides educational benefits (SOP 113), in the form of tuition reimbursement for its members taking college or university classes. ELFR also pays incentives for degrees earned from accredited colleges or universities and for any state approved training that earns them a state certificate (ELTSFCD, SOP manual, 2010).

Results of ELFR Fire Safety Education Questionnaire

The September 2010 ELFR Fire Safety Education Questionnaire (Appendix B), which was given to 30 ELFR line personnel, was returned by 73% (22) of them. Each respondent

answered all of the questions. The following highlights some key results detailed in Part 3. (Appendix D).

Questions one through three, established the importance of fire safety education to the line personnel. Although only 68% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that fire safety education is an important function of ELFR and 64% agreed or strongly agreed that EFLR values fire safety education, 95% agreed or strongly agreed that fire safety education is the responsibility of every member of ELFR. Questions four and five recognize how fire safety education is promoted in and out of the department. Where only 46% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the program is promoted well in the department, 54% agreed or strongly agreed that the program is promoted well in the community.

Questions six and seven, establish awareness of the goals and objectives. Of the respondents, 50% agreed or strongly agreed that they were aware of the goals of the program and 50% agreed or strongly agreed they were aware of the program objectives. For questions eight and nine, which addressed preparing for and making fire safety education presentations, only 32% of the respondents indicated that they use a lesson plan when making a fire safety education presentation, although 64% agreed or strongly agreed that they felt competent in their presentations.

Question 10 illustrated that half of the respondents were indifferent to their being enough money budgeted for the program. Questions 11 and 12 showed what they think about the program now and if it should be expanded. Where 46% were agreed or strongly agreed that the current Pre-K and Kindergarten program is adequate, 82% agreed and strongly agreed that the fire safety education program should expand to first through fifth grades.

Question 13 looked at the amount of time spent on activities related to the program, where 32% were indifferent and 50% agreed or strongly agreed they do spend enough time. Additionally, in question 14 there were 59% that agreed and strongly agreed that they would like to be more involved in these activities.

Finally, in question 15, 69% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that they were aware of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives and question 16, 100% of them agreed and strongly agreed that fire safety education can save firefighter lives.

Discussion

Identifying how fire safety education is ideally supported within a fire department's organizational structure was the first step in a process to discover where ELFR lacked support in its organization that hindered the effectiveness of its fire safety education program. The U.S. Fire Administration's *Public Fire Education Planning, A Five Step Process* provided the structure for discovering the ideal components of an organization (FEMA, 2008). There are five components in which an organization can institutionalize a fire safety education program: through its mission statement, in a fire prevention strategy, in its budget, through job descriptions, and with education and training (FEMA, 2008). This, in turn, led to the development of the "Organizational Audit of Fire Safety Education Support" (Appendix A) and the ELFR Fire Safety Education Questionnaire (Appendix B) to help highlight the areas of concern regarding ELFR's fire safety education program. A discussion is offered regarding the ideal support of these components for the organizational structure, ELFR's current status, and the impact it may be having. Certainly it is worth discussing because, as *The Fire Chief's Handbook* points out, shared organizational values and an understanding of the organizational culture is one of the assurances in keeping the department moving forward (Barr & Eversole, 2003).

The mission statement sets a number of goals in which an organization is attempting to accomplish as a service to the community. In turn, the community can also look at the mission statement of the organization to be aware of what services it can expect. Whether one describes it as fire safety education, public or community education, or fire and life safety education, it should be integrated into the mission statement as a key component, equal to code enforcement and emergency response, that is supported at the executive level and demonstrated in and out of the organization (NFPA, 2003). Respondents to the questionnaire had mixed feelings about the way the fire safety education program is promoted in and out of the organization. This may be because the administration has not promoted the importance of fire safety education as a goal in the department's mission. This is why community education is viewed as something that is only done in October. However, support for fire safety education at the highest level should be demonstrated by showing the importance of the department's fire prevention strategy to the community and the members of the department (NFPA, 2003).

The fire prevention strategy must have a strong leadership with defined tasks, and education and training to deliver the elements of this component (NFFF, 2004). Unfortunately, ELFR, lacking a written fire prevention strategy and maintaining a fire safety education program that has not changed in over 25 years, may be "leading to the way of incompetence and wastefulness" (Barr & Eversole, 2003). In this strategy fire safety education should have an influence in the planning method to assure sufficient resources (NFPA, 2003). *Public Fire Education Planning, A Five Step Process* views community education as a department wide activity, that "the most successful community education programs all share one common strategy: every person [in the organization] is a community educator" (FEMA, 2008, p. I-9). When one compares the lack of a fire prevention strategy and an outdated fire safety education

program that is without a course outline to the results of the questionnaire returned from the line personnel an interesting outcome emerges. It appears that 50% the respondents to the questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed that they were aware of the goals of the program and the same percentage were aware of the program's objectives. With 64% of the respondents feeling competent about delivering the presentations, this demonstrates a serious disconnect about what needs to be accomplished from the current fire safety education program and the respondent's confidence in doing so. It also demonstrates the need for a fire prevention strategy or at the very least a lesson plan to make sure that everyone is aware of the goals and objectives of the program.

Fire safety education should be supported by a sufficient budget where the leadership of the organization pledge support for fire safety education programs and seek additional resources within the community and beyond (NFPA, 2003; Barr & Eversole, 2003). However, ELFR is like many other organizations that are facing budgetary issues – always looking for ways to “trim” the budget. Up to this point in time ELFR has been fortunate not to eliminate its small fire safety education program. When times are tough the public education department of an organization is often the first to be cut in the budget. There is and will be a constant demand to fund the “bread and butter” services of the fire department, such as fire operations and EMS both competing for more personnel, equipment, and training. With these important demands, public education is up against the wall and is faced with either being last in or left out of the budget. A couple of ways to remedy this is to actively seek funding from grants and where the fire chiefs can open doors she or he can create valuable community partnerships (NFPA, 2003). Interestingly, the results of the questionnaire showed that 50% of the respondents were indifferent to the amount of money allocated to public education. This is most likely because the

members do not participate in the budget process. It is possible that there would be more interest if they were to become more of a partner in the department by assisting in seeking out such things as community in-kind contributions and local, state, and federal grants.

Although ELFR has the potential to educate a lot of people with 36 firefighters, fire safety education is practically nonexistent in the duties and responsibilities of all members of ELFR, except for the month of October when everyone becomes a fire safety educator. Fire safety education should be part of the job description of everyone in the organization, especially in the executive staff. If the staff does not uphold fire safety education in their positions then it would be hard to expect the line personnel to make it a part of their daily duties (FEMA, 2009, 2010). Maintaining the direction or mission of the organization is dynamic and in order to stay on course management is responsible for creating or modifying goals through work performance, promotions, training, and education (Barr & Eversole, 2003). With fire safety education as part of everyone's job description it would provide a collective voice in decision making for fire safety education. It would be an effortless transition to include fire safety education as part of the job descriptions, especially when 95% of the respondents of the questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed that fire safety education was everyone's responsibility. Every firefighter of the department has been tested and certified by the state as a firefighter who has met the requisite knowledge and skills to deliver fire safety messages, along with the fire officers that have also been tested and certified by the state who have met the requisite knowledge and skills to develop fire safety programs.

In addition to including fire safety education in job descriptions, it should be supported with continuing education and training at regional and national courses (NFPA, 2003). In order to meet the responsibility of fire safety education the members of the organization need to be

prepared with the knowledge and skills to meet the expectations of the community (NFPA, 2010). Knowledge from courses at the Florida State Fire College and the National Fire Academy can meet those needs. With increasing needs and requirements for training in fire-ground operations and EMS, fire safety education and training is missing from the “toolbox” of each member of the department. With the proper education, preparedness, and training ELFR members can provide an important service to the community and it is through fire safety education that the organization can teach citizens how to prevent injury, property loss, and potentially unexpected death which in turn will put “less demand on other emergency services” (Barr & Eversole, 2003, p 1063). The need for training with a minimum of a lesson plan is evident with only 32% of the respondents indicating that they use a lesson plan when making a fire safety education presentation. Both the *Fire Chief's Handbook* and the *Fire Protection Handbook* agree that all it would take would be a written operating procedure that contains a lesson plan or course outline written to provide a list of learning objectives that anyone could use to convey a consistent fire safety message (Barr & Eversole, 2003; NFPA, 2003).

Recommendations

The problem was that the effectiveness of East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District's fire safety education program is hindered by a lack of support within the organizational structure. The purpose of the research was to examine support issues related to the department's fire safety effort and to make recommendations for change to the organizational structure that would lead to an increase in fire safety education program effectiveness. The results of the study exposed a number of shortcomings in the organization: community education in the mission statement lack department-wide support, there was no fire prevention strategy, job descriptions did not include a public education element, training and education in public education was not

promoted, and administration was not actively pursuing grant monies or community partnerships. Unless there is an organizational and community commitment to fire safety education it will continue to be dismissed and devalued.

Both short and long-term recommendations derived from this research are the results of a simple audit tool. This tool identifies five components and its elements of the organizational structure that supports the fire safety education program of ELFR. This research can be utilized in part or as a whole for any established fire department.

A short-term recommendation for ELFR is to develop a lesson plan or course outline for the presentations to be given to the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children that will be seen this October. In addition, a simple evaluation tool should be developed to test the retention of the fire safety education messages in these children in six months. This evaluation tool will also measure the effectiveness of the crews in delivering these messages and to identify where crews may need additional education and training. Furthermore, feedback from the community will determine if the program(s) are working.

Additional short-term recommendations that should be accomplished within one year are: establish a dialog between ELFR and the schools within its district (both public and private) to make the necessary steps to introduce a plan for a fire and life safety program to include the first through fifth grades. This plan could utilize a program such as the NFPA's Risk Watch® program or something of a similar nature. Moreover, the fire administration should actively search and apply for grants, in-kind contributions, and community partnerships to support this effort. Moreover, the evaluation of the progress of each component must be utilized in order to assure organizational effectiveness.

The senior staff should also encourage the participation of a core group of its members to participate in fire and life safety educational opportunities. This core group, which should include a senior staff member, can then disseminate information that they have acquired to the rest of the department. This should be easily accomplished since almost 60% of the respondents to the questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed that they would like to be more involved with the fire safety education program.

The long-term recommendations are: at the onset, for the senior staff of the department to establish community partnerships with the purpose of developing an organizational strategic plan. This group can then review the audit tools and use it as a guide for instituting the fire prevention strategy component of the organization support structure, along with filling in and completing the missing elements within the mission statement, job descriptions, the department budget, and training components. These long-term recommendations are not meant to be accomplished in the typical three to five years. A long-term recommendation here means that it may take a bit longer than a year to accomplish and would require more of an assertive effort to fulfill. Moreover, these long-term recommendations cannot be delayed just because it has a label of “long-term” over them since more lives are at risk the longer it takes to accomplish these recommendations.

The community and ELFR have been lucky not to have had any physical injuries or life loss due to children playing with fire. What's more, this urgency exists because the department cannot afford to continue to miss any opportunities to provide important fire and life safety messages due to organizational ineptness. This especially, in light of the fact that 40 children from this fire district have been caught in the act of fire play in the last five years. There is still the unknown aspect that there are perhaps children in the district that are playing with fire and

have not been caught or their parents are aware of this problem but are ignoring it and are hoping that it is only a phase that everyone goes through and the situation will resolve itself.

With a strong organizational structure in place; it would lead to an increase of effectiveness in fire safety education program. As a result, the department can easily accomplish the goal of keeping residents safe from harm by reducing the occurrences of fires and at the same time possibly saving firefighter lives which all the respondents to questionnaire strongly believe.

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Appendix A

ORGANIZATIONAL AUDIT OF FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION SUPPORT

Part One: MISSION

Completed by: _____ Document(s) Examined: _____

Position: _____ Date of document(s): _____

ELEMENTS THAT IDEALLY SUPPORT A FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM

- ☐ written and clearly defined
- ☐ identifies organization
- ☐ indicates what services are mandated
- ☐ reflects how mission will be accomplished
- ☐ includes “prevention” (or similar)
- ☐ includes “public fire safety education” (or similar)
- ☐ “enforcement”, “education”, and “response” are given equal importance
- ☐ gives importance to training and preparing members
- ☐ encourages relationships with community partners

Part Two: PREVENTION STRATEGY

Completed by: _____ Document(s) Examined: _____

Position: _____ Date of document(s): _____

ELEMENTS THAT IDEALLY SUPPORT A FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM

- ☐ written and clearly defined
- ☐ includes a mission statement
- ☐ stabilizes the organization
- ☐ embraces service delivery
- ☐ a vision to move fire safety education forward
- ☐ pro-active in approach towards fire safety education
- ☐ flexible in implementation of fire safety education
- ☐ sets long term goals for fire safety education
- ☐ establishes priorities for fire safety education
- ☐ assesses environment for developing and delivering fire safety education

- ☐ assesses external environment for developing and delivery fire safety education
- ☐ defines internal objectives of a fire safety education program
- ☐ defines external objectives of a fire safety education program
- ☐ utilizes input from community regarding fire safety education
- ☐ undergoes periodic evaluation and revision
- ☐ provides for employee training in fire safety education
- ☐ provides for citizen training in fire safety education
- ☐ addresses wise use of resources for fire safety education
- ☐ includes a marketing plan for fire safety education

Part Three: Budget

Completed by:

Document(s) Examined:

Position:

Date of document(s):

ELEMENTS THAT IDEALLY SUPPORT A FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM

- ☐ provisions made for seminars and conferences
- ☐ travel and meal expenses
- ☐ software programs, CDs, trade magazines
- ☐ develop partnership with other community organizations
- ☐ in-kind contributions from community for services, time, and products
- ☐ performance goals and objectives, met or ongoing
- ☐ provide sufficient funding for materials and supplies
- ☐ provide sufficient funding for personnel
- ☐ seek grant funding
- ☐ detailed accounting of expenditures

Part Four: Job Description

Completed by:

Document(s) Examined:

Position:

Date of document(s):

ELEMENTS THAT IDEALLY SUPPORT A FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM

- ☐ fire safety education responsibility of fire chief
- ☐ fire safety education responsibility of deputy chief/fire marshall
- ☐ fire safety education responsibility of division chief (operations, training, ems)
- ☐ fire safety education responsibility of district chief

- ☐ fire safety education responsibility of lieutenants
- ☐ fire safety education responsibility of line personnel
- ☐ can represent public education in and out of the organization
- ☐ can describe how public education integrates with the mission
- ☐ can identify public education as a part of the organizational structure
- ☐ assigns public education to a specific manager
- ☐ gives public education a voice in decision making and planning
- ☐ provides adequate personnel and other resources to public education program
- ☐ includes public education in strategies, operations, and budget plans
- ☐ accesses organizations in and out of the department
- ☐ attends public educator professional development meetings and conferences
- ☐ can make public education presentations (firefighters NFPA 1001)
- ☐ can develop and deliver public education program (fire officers NFPA 1021)

Part Five: Training

Completed by:

Document(s) Examined:

Position:

Date of document:

ELEMENTS THAT IDEALLY SUPPORT A FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM

- ☐ training and education meets the expectations of the mission
- ☐ pay incentive for formal education
- ☐ everyone is a community educator
- ☐ confident in working from a lesson plan or course outline
- ☐ promotes state and national educational programs or courses
- ☐ ongoing evaluation and revision of fire safety education training
- ☐ feedback from community on program delivery of the message and content

Appendix B

ELFR
FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION
QUESTIONNAIRE

THANK YOU for taking the time to complete this questionnaire about ELFR's fire safety education (community education / public education / prevention) efforts.

Please complete this questionnaire as soon as possible. It will likely take about 3 minutes. You should remain anonymous. Please do not write any words (name, shift, position, notes, questions, comments, etc.) on the questionnaire.

Please circle the single number that best corresponds to your attitude regarding the statement.

- 1 = Strongly disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Indifferent
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

1. Fire safety education is an important function of ELFR.

(Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 *(Agree)*

2. Fire safety education is the responsibility of every member of ELFR.

(Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 *(Agree)*

3. ELFR, as a department, values fire safety education.

(Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 *(Agree)*

4. ELFR's fire safety education program is well promoted within the department.

(Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 *(Agree)*

5. ELFR's fire safety education program is well promoted in the community.

(Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 *(Agree)*

6. I am aware of the goals of ELFR's fire safety education program.

(Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 *(Agree)*

continued on next page

7. I am aware of the objectives of ELFR's fire safety education program.

(Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Agree)

8. I use a lesson plan when making a fire safety education presentation.

(Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Agree)

9. I feel competent when making a fire safety education presentation.

(Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Agree)

10. The budget allocates enough money for the fire safety education program.

(Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Agree)

11. The fire safety education program is adequate (teaching pre-K & Kindergarten).

(Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Agree)

12. The fire safety education program should be expanded to grades 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5.

(Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Agree)

13. I spend enough time on activities related to the fire safety education program.

(Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Agree)

14. I would like to be more involved in fire safety education activities.

(Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Agree)

15. I am aware that public education is one of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives.

(Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Agree)

16. I believe that an emphasis on fire safety education could save firefighter lives.

(Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Agree)

Please put your completed questionnaire in the envelope provided. Do not write on the envelope – it is already addressed. Follow regular department procedures for delivery. THANK YOU for your participation in this study.

Appendix C

September 5, 2010

Greetings:

As you may know I am enrolled in my second year of the National Fire Academy's four year Executive Fire Officer Program. My current course of study is "Executive Analysis of Community Risk Reduction". As part of my course requirements I am completing research on a topic of interest to me that may also be of some benefit to the department. I have chosen to examine issues related to how fire safety education is ideally supported within a fire department's organizational structure.

I am requesting that you anonymously complete the attached questionnaire. It is short (only 16 questions) and requires simply choosing and circling your answer. Because the questionnaire is designed to measure attitudes, there is no right or wrong.

I would be very grateful to you for taking the time to participate. Each and every response is very important to my understanding of the topic.

If possible, please submit your complete questionnaire by September 9, 2010.

If you are interested in the results of the questionnaire or my research paper, you may contact me.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Mark Teolis

District Chief

East Lake Fire Rescue

RESULTS FOR SEPTEMBER 2010 ELFR FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION QUESTIONNAIRE																						PART 1	
Columns A - V represent each of 22 respondents																							
Rows 1 - 16 represent each of 16 questions																							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	AVG
1	4	5	5	4	1	5	5	4	5	4	4	3	3	4	2	3	4	2	5	5	3	4	3.82
2	4	4	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	4	3	5	5	4	5	4.50
3	5	4	5	4	3	2	5	2	4	4	4	3	4	4	2	3	3	2	5	5	4	4	3.68
4	4	5	5	4	2	1	5	2	3	4	3	2	3	4	2	3	2	2	5	5	3	4	3.32
5	4	5	3	4	2	1	5	2	4	3	4	2	4	4	2	4	3	2	5	5	2	4	3.36
6	5	5	5	4	3	1	5	1	3	4	2	2	4	4	2	3	3	2	5	5	2	4	3.36
7	4	5	5	4	3	1	5	1	2	4	3	2	4	4	2	3	2	3	3	4	4	4	3.27
8	2	2	3	5	4	1	3	3	3	5	3	2	2	2	2	3	5	2	4	2	5	4	3.05
9	4	5	5	5	4	1	3	3	3	4	3	4	2	4	3	4	4	2	4	4	4	4	3.59
10	3	3	2	2	2	3	5	1	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	4	3	2	2.68
11	3	5	4	2	3	3	5	2	3	3	4	2	4	4	3	2	3	5	3	5	4	5	3.50
12	4	3	5	5	5	1	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	3	5	5	4	3	4.32
13	4	4	4	4	3	5	3	1	3	3	4	3	2	2	4	3	2	4	4	4	3	4	3.32
14	4	3	4	5	5	1	3	2	3	4	3	3	4	4	1	4	4	3	5	4	4	4	3.50
15	4	5	4	5	4	3	3	2	3	4	2	4	5	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3.73
16	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4.77
AVG	3.94	4.25	4.25	4.19	3.31	2.44	4.38	2.56	3.44	3.94	3.56	2.94	3.56	3.69	2.81	3.56	3.38	2.88	4.38	4.44	3.56	4.00	3.61

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Indifferent 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

RESULTS FOR SEPTEMBER 2010 ELFR FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION QUESTIONNAIRE							PART 2
Columns 1 - 5 indicate how many of 22 respondents selected the rating							
Rows 1 - 16 represent each of 16 questions							
							RATING
							AVG
1	Fire safety education is an important function of ELFR.	1	2	4	8	7	3.82
2	Fire safety education is the responsibility of every member of ELFR.	0	0	1	9	12	4.50
3	ELFR, as a department, values fire safety education.	0	4	4	9	5	3.68
4	ELFR's fire safety education program is well promoted within the department.	1	6	5	5	5	3.32
5	ELFR's fire safety education program is well promoted in the community.	1	6	3	8	4	3.36
6	I am aware of the goals of ELFR's fire safety education program.	2	5	4	5	6	3.36
7	I am aware of the objectives of ELFR's fire safety education program.	2	4	5	8	3	3.27
8	I use a lesson plan when making a fire safety education presentation.	1	8	6	3	4	3.05
9	I feel competent when making a fire safety education presentation.	1	2	5	11	3	3.59
10	The budget allocates enough money for the fire safety education program.	1	8	11	1	1	2.68
11	The fire safety education program is adequate (teaching pre-K and Kindergarten).	0	4	8	5	5	3.50
12	The fire safety education program should be expanded to grades 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.	1	0	3	5	13	4.32
13	I spend enough time on activities related to the fire safety education program.	1	3	7	10	1	3.32
14	I would like to be more involved in fire safety education activities.	2	1	6	10	3	3.50
15	I am aware that public education is one of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives.	0	2	5	12	3	3.73
16	I believe that an emphasis on fire safety education could save firefighter lives.	0	0	0	5	17	4.77

RESULTS FOR SEPTEMBER 2010 ELFR FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION QUESTIONNAIRE						PART 3
Columns 1 - 5 indicate what percentage of 22 respondents selected the rating						
Rows 1 - 16 represent each of 16 questions						
		RATING				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Fire safety education is an important function of ELFR.	5%	9%	18%	36%	32%
2	Fire safety education is the responsibility of every member of ELFR.	0%	0%	5%	41%	55%
3	ELFR, as a department, values fire safety education.	0%	18%	18%	41%	23%
4	ELFR's fire safety education program is well promoted within the department.	5%	27%	23%	23%	23%
5	ELFR's fire safety education program is well promoted in the community.	5%	27%	14%	36%	18%
6	I am aware of the goals of ELFR's fire safety education program.	9%	23%	18%	23%	27%
7	I am aware of the objectives of ELFR's fire safety education program.	9%	18%	23%	36%	14%
8	I use a lesson plan when making a fire safety education presentation.	5%	36%	27%	14%	18%
9	I feel competent when making a fire safety education presentation.	5%	9%	23%	50%	14%
10	The budget allocates enough money for the fire safety education program.	5%	36%	50%	5%	5%
11	The fire safety education program is adequate (teaching pre-K and Kindergarten).	0%	18%	36%	23%	23%
12	The fire safety education program should be expanded to grades 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.	5%	0%	14%	23%	59%
13	I spend enough time on activities related to the fire safety education program.	5%	14%	32%	45%	5%
14	I would like to be more involved in fire safety education activities.	9%	5%	27%	45%	14%
15	I am aware that public education is one of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives.	0%	9%	23%	55%	14%
16	I believe that an emphasis on fire safety education could save firefighter lives.	0%	0%	0%	23%	77%
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Indifferent 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree						